

**** Electronic Copy – No Hard Copy to Follow ****

April 26, 2002

Memorandum

To: Superintendents, National Capital Region

From: Regional Director, National Capital Region

Subject: National Capital Region Monitoring Workshop: *Planning for the future*

As part of the Natural Resource Challenge, the National Capital Network is now fully funded to develop an integrated and comprehensive long-term monitoring plan for our region's parks. The monitoring plan will provide information essential to preserving and enhancing the region's most important natural resources. A single, integrated program to monitor both physical and biological resources such as air and water quality, geologic resources, weather, fire effects, threatened and endangered species, exotic species, and other flora and fauna is planned to better understand the status and trends of our natural resources. A detailed monitoring plan will be developed through the collaborative work of the Inventory & Monitoring program's staff, Board of Directors, and Science Advisory Committee.

The National Capital Region Monitoring Workshop: *Planning for the future*

A monitoring workshop is planned for **July 9-11** at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV to determine what should be monitored in the National Capital Region and how the program could be implemented. It is also designed to foster partnerships with regional conservation groups and agencies to enhance and protect the region's most valuable natural resources. Technical experts from federal and state agencies, universities, and natural heritage programs will be invited along with park and regional staff to share their expertise.

The first day of the meeting, July 9, will feature facilitated breakout discussions for park personnel including superintendents, interpreters, rangers, cultural and resource managers, and maintenance staff along with other invited guests. Discussions will include topics such as Educating the public – how can scientists work with park interpreters?, Crossing park boundaries – developing partnerships to protect natural resources inside and outside of the national parks, and Using sound science to manage the parks – exploring relevancy of long-term monitoring to park operations.

Technical workgroups focusing on each of the most important natural resources will meet during the following two days (July 10 and 11) to identify the critical threats to the resources, identify vital sign indicators to be monitored, develop monitoring priorities, and consider protocols used to most efficiently monitor critical resources. See attached agenda for more details.

Attendance and participation is critical to the success of this workshop. **Please encourage participation by your staff in the workshop. Space is limited – participants must return the**

attached registration form as soon as possible to enroll in the workshop. There is no registration fee for the meeting. Lodging and per diem can be provided by the NCR I & M program if necessary as indicated on the registration form. More detailed materials, including information on lodging, will be sent to participants after they register.

Additional information on the monitoring workshop and other details of the implementation strategy for vital signs monitoring can be obtained from Dr. Jim Sherald, Chief, Natural Resources and Science, (202) 342-1443 extension 208, or Dr. Ellen Gray, I&M Coordinator, National Capital Region, (202) 342-1443 extension 223.

Attachment